

and between individual males of the same population flying at the same time. Look at the scales from the two males taken 23.v.89 on the foreshore at Aros, Isle of Mull (0029) has short, fat scales in contrast to the narrower, more elongate scales of 0026. A similar difference can be seen between two generations of Worcestershire specimens bred in 1985 and 1986 from the same female – very strange. A comparison between first generation males from northwest Scotland and the English Midlands confirms Thomson in that the northerners *tend* to exhibit a range of scale shapes whereas the southerners *tend* towards a more uniform short, squat scale at least in the spring brood. Much work remains to be done!

Back to the livestock and a (non-mathematical) reality. The Perthshire pupae eventually emerged in April, 2001 and, as always with *napi*, were ridiculously easy to pair. I had 217 second generation pupae by the end of May. Of these, 67 emerged in early June but the rest stubbornly refused to do so and are overwintering in my shed as I write (October). The June butterflies produced a third generation of 63 pupae of which only a *single male* emerged in the first week of July. The remaining 62 have joined their uncles and aunts to sleep away the winter months in my outdoor shed. Presumably, both generations will emerge together in April 2002? Is this a “hedge-your-bets” strategy to deal with unpredictable northern summers? What controls the emergence process? Is this perhaps the really significant characteristic of subspecies *thomsoni*?

Incidentally, most of the overwintering pupae of both generations are of a pale straw colour. Green overwintering pupae accounted for 12% of the second generation and 31% of the third. Once this mathematical approach gets hold it never lets go!

My only firm conclusion from all this is that my original contention is true. *Pieris napi* really is the most interesting British butterfly!— MIKE BRYAN, Extons, Taunton Road, Bishops Lydeard, Somerset TA4 3LR.

An update on the Silurian moth *Eriopygodes imbecilla* (Fab.) (Lep.: Noctuidae) in Monmouthshire in 2001

The *Butterfly Guardians* weekend workshop at Abergavenny on 23/24 June 2001, organised by Nichola Davies and Norman Lowe for Butterfly Conservation, provided an opportunity to inspect the known locality for the Silurian moth *Eriopygodes imbecilla*, five years after my last visit in 1996. The workshop covered the field craft and other tips helpful in finding the adults and larvae of this and other relevant UK Biodiversity Action Plan Priority Moths and the High and Medium Priority Moths listed in Butterfly Conservation's National Action Plan for Wales (compiled by Jenny Joy, 1998). The workshop culminated in ten of us camping and light-trapping in the Silurian gullies in the nearby mountains on the night of 23 June. The aim was to show the group the Silurian moth and the habitat in which it occurs so that local group members could recognise and explore other potential sites and

possibly locate other breeding areas. We operated two Robinson traps all night in the gully where the Silurian was first discovered in Britain in 1972 (*Ent. Rec.* **88**: 246-248) and two more Robinson traps in similar habitat about 2 km to the north where I discovered the moth in 1995 (*Ent. Rec.* **108**: 24-25, 149-150 & *British Wildlife* **7**: 53-54). These are still the only places in Britain where the moth is known to be resident. A single male was captured in a light-trap in Abergavenny, Monmouthshire, on 6 July 1999 by Sally Brown in her suburban garden some 10 km from the known breeding grounds and another singleton was light-trapped just over the English border in the Black Mountains of Herefordshire on the night of 12/13 July 1999 by Mike Harper, some 20 km away (*British Wildlife* **11**: 59). Additional trap-nights at the latter in 2000 failed to find more but there was much potential habitat beyond the range of the trap and it is to be hoped that both these singletons are an indication of the existence of undiscovered colonies.

We recorded seven male Silurian near the top of the original gully (trap-site A), two in the trap at the bottom (trap-site B), two more in a sheltered hollow in the mountainside (trap-site C) at the second site and none by a nearby stream (trap-site D). These results can be compared with the numbers seen on my previous light-trapping visits in 1995 using the same equipment and techniques.

Trap-sites	Numbers of Silurian moth in traps on dates in 1995			
	27 June	29 June	3 July	4 July
A	49	38	17	
B	58	65	36	
C				17
D				3

The lower numbers on the earlier trapping date (23 June) in 2001 probably reflect only the less advanced stage of the flight period. All the individuals were in fresh condition. As in 1995, there were no Silurian when the traps were first inspected at midnight, all arrived later, hence the necessity to operate the traps all night, and all were males (my visits in 1996 were unsuccessful searches for larvae in daylight and after dark on 17-18 April, 11-12 May and 26-27 May.)

The sites and habitat where we saw the Silurian in 2001 looked in just the same condition as in my photographs of the sites taken during the flight season in 1995. Heath Bedstraw *Galium saxatile*, the suspected larval foodplant, was in full flower and abundant in the gullies and sheep-tracks.

I thank Butterfly Conservation for covering my costs as lecturer and leader on this workshop and thank all those who attended. I hope that the search for the Silurian in the other likely places which exist in south Wales and the Black Mountains will be intensified as a result and that undiscovered populations will be found.— PAUL WARING, 1366 Lincoln Road, Werrington, Peterborough PE4 6LS (E-mail: paul_waring@btinternet.com).